

# INTRODUCTION

This report is the second of two publications containing results from the 1998 Survey of Industrial Research and Development. The first publication, a data brief announcing the availability of survey results, contains analytical information and highlights the increase in industrial research and development (R&D) funded from companies' own resources and the increased sales and employment of R&D-performing scientists and engineers reported by R&D-performing firms. This report contains the full set of statistics produced from the survey including statistics on R&D funding for the years 1988–98 and on R&D personnel for the period January 1989 to January 1999.

This report provides national estimates of the expenditures on R&D performed within the United States by industrial firms, whether U.S.- or foreign-owned. Among the statistics are estimates of total R&D, the portion of the total financed by the Federal Government, and the portion financed by the companies themselves or by other non-Federal sources such as state and local governments or other industrial firms under contract or subcontract. Total R&D is also separated into its character of work components (basic research, applied research, and development) and into the types of costs (wages, materials and supplies, depreciation, and other). Other statistics include R&D financed by a domestic firm but performed outside the United States, R&D contracted to organizations outside of the firm, and the funds spent to perform energy-related R&D. Also, this report provides information on R&D-performing firms including domestic net sales, number of employees, number of R&D-performing scientists and engineers, geographic location of where the R&D is performed, and R&D funds per R&D-performing scientist and engineer.

The Survey of Industrial Research and Development is an annual sample survey that intends to include or represent all for-profit R&D-performing companies, either publicly or privately held. The survey's primary focus is on U.S. industry as a performer of, rather than as a source of funds for, R&D. Thus, data on Federal support of R&D activities performed by industry are collected, and the resulting statistics appear in several tables while statistics on industrial funding of R&D undertaken at universities and colleges and other nonprofit organizations are not

collected or included.<sup>1</sup> The result of collecting and publishing performer-reported statistics is that the federally funded R&D performance totals presented in this report differ from the totals reported by the Federal agencies that provide the funds and the statistics published in NSF's *Federal Funds for Research and Development* report series. One reason for these differences is that performers of R&D often expend Federal funds in a year other than the one in which the Federal Government provides authorization, obligations, or outlays. (For definitions of these terms, see section B, "Comparisons to Other Statistical Series.") During the past several years, the differences have widened between the Federal R&D funding reported by performers and that reported by funding agencies. These differences are documented and analyzed in *National Patterns of R&D Resources: 1998* (NSF 99-335).

Industry statistics in this report were developed from data collected from individual companies.<sup>2</sup> Since the survey is company-based rather than establishment-based, all data collected for the various components of each company (plants, divisions, or subdivisions) were tabulated in the company's major Standard Industrial Classification (SIC). The resulting industry estimates were reported using the SIC of the companies within each industry. National totals were estimated by summing the industry estimates.

Prior to the 1994 survey cycle, all companies that spent more than \$1 million annually on R&D in the United States or had 1,000 or more employees received a survey questionnaire every year. Beginning with the 1994 cycle, the employee cutoff was dropped from the criteria and, beginning with the 1996 cycle, the R&D level was raised to \$5 million, where it has remained for subsequent surveys. For all cycles of the survey, the remaining firms

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<sup>1</sup>Data on R&D performed at universities and colleges are collected in the annual Survey of Research and Development Expenditures at Universities and Colleges. More information about these surveys is available from NSF's Research and Development Statistics Program in the Division of Science Resources Studies.

<sup>2</sup>In the Survey of Industrial Research and Development and in the publications presenting statistics resulting from the survey, the terms "firm," "company," and "enterprise" are used interchangeably. "Industry" refers to the activity or group of activities included in the 2- or 3-digit standard industrial classifications (SICs) or groups of SICs used to array statistics resulting from the survey.

(i.e., those that were not considered “certainties” because of the selection criteria) were subjected to probability sampling and may or may not receive a questionnaire for a given survey year. Among the organizations purposely excluded from the survey were trade associations and not-for-profit industrial consortia. Although their primary mission is to serve industry, these associations were excluded because they are nonprofit organizations.

Respondents receive detailed definitions to help them determine which expenses to include or exclude from the R&D data they provide. Nevertheless, the statistics presented in this report are subject to response and concept errors caused by differences in the way respondents interpret the definitions of R&D activities and by variations in company accounting procedures.

The National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended, authorizes and directs the National Science Foundation (NSF) “...to provide a central clearinghouse for the collection, interpretation, and analysis of data on the availability of, and the current and projected need for, scientific and technical resources in the United States, and to provide a source of information for policy formulation by other agencies of the Federal Government.” The Survey of Industrial Research and Development is the vehicle with which NSF carries out the industrial portion of this mandate. NSF’s Division of Science Resources Studies has sponsored and managed a survey of industrial R&D since 1953. The 1953–56 surveys were conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in the U.S. Department of Labor.<sup>3</sup> Since 1957, the Bureau of the Census in the U.S. Department of Commerce has conducted the survey.<sup>4</sup> Census staff conduct the survey under Title 13 of the United States Code, which prohibits publication or release of data or statistics that may reveal information about individual companies. Therefore, in some tables of this report, the symbol “(D)” is used to indicate that estimates were withheld to avoid possible disclosure of information about operations of individual companies.

The content of the survey has been expanded and refined over the years in response to an increasing need

by policymakers for more detailed information on the nation’s R&D effort. For example, questions on energy R&D were added in the early 1970s, following the oil shortage crisis. On the other hand, collection of certain data items has been eliminated in recent years in an attempt to alleviate some of the burden on respondents. For large firms known to perform R&D, a detailed questionnaire (Form RD-1) is used to collect data. To limit the reporting burden on small R&D performers and firms included in the sample for the first time, an abbreviated questionnaire (Form RD-1A), which collects only the most crucial data, is used.

Several changes have been made to the survey since the early 1990s that are of special importance to users of this report. Prior to the 1992 survey, statistics were based on samples selected at irregular intervals (i.e., 1967, 1971, 1976, 1981, and 1987). In intervening years, a subset of the last sample, a panel, was used. The most recent sample before the 1992 survey was selected and first used for survey year 1987. Original estimates for 1988–91 were based on surveys of approximately 1,700 panel companies that reported R&D activity in the 1987 survey. Beginning with the 1992 survey, statistics were based on samples selected annually. Also beginning with the 1992 survey, the sample size was increased from approximately 14,000 to approximately 25,000 firms. Annual sampling and the increase in sample size were instituted for several reasons: (1) to account better for births of R&D-performing establishments in the survey universe; (2) to survey more fully and accurately R&D performed by nonmanufacturing firms, especially in the service sector; and (3) to gather more current information about potential R&D performers.

Tables containing the statistics resulting from the 1998 survey are provided in section A. Detailed information about survey methodology, comparability of the statistics, survey definitions, history of the survey, and other technical notes are provided in section B. Survey questionnaires, instructions, and other survey documents are reproduced in section C. Specific questions regarding the survey may be directed to Raymond Wolfe at (703) 292-7789, [rwolfe@nsf.gov](mailto:rwolfe@nsf.gov), or at the following mailing address:

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<sup>3</sup>See NSF (1956) and NSF (1960).

<sup>4</sup>Data obtained in the earlier BLS surveys are not directly comparable with Census figures because of methodological and other differences.